

Definitions

Transgender is an umbrella term that refers to people whose gender identity is different from their assigned sex. Transgender people may have any sexual orientation.

Seattle's civil rights ordinance defines **Gender Identity** as people's identity, expression, or physical characteristics, whether or not traditionally associated with their biological sex, and including people's attitudes, preferences, beliefs, and practices.

Community Resources:

Seattle LGBT Commission
206-684-4500 www.seattle.gov/lgbt/

Ingersoll Gender Center
www.ingersollcenter.org

Entre Hermanos
206-322-7700 www.entrehermanos.org

Discrimination Data

A recent survey of transgender people in Seattle found:

Employment discrimination: 41% felt they were denied employment or experienced some form of discrimination at work.

Housing instability: 14.7% of those surveyed were homeless or lost housing due to their gender identity.

(Source: Ingersoll Gender Center)

The Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) envisions a city where all people enjoy equal rights, equal opportunity and freedom from illegal discrimination.



SOCR promotes racial and social justice for everyone in Seattle through education, policy work, and enforcement of civil rights laws.

If you feel you have been discriminated against or have questions about your rights, contact us at **206-684-4500** or visit www.seattle.gov/civilrights.

Our services are free. Language interpretation and reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities are provided upon request.

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Transgender Civil Rights

Protecting Gender Identity and Gender Expression



Seattle Office for Civil Rights
810 Third Avenue, Suite 750,
Seattle, WA 98104
206-684-4500
www.seattle.gov/civilrights

How do civil rights laws protect transgender people?

It is illegal to discriminate against people on the basis of their gender identity in:

- **Housing**
- **Employment**
- **Businesses and other public places**



Knowing the law is good for business

If your organization or business would like to receive training on civil rights laws and how they apply to your business please contact SOCR at 206-684-4500 for a free workshop tailored to meet the needs of your staff and clients.

Q & A: Civil rights and gender identity

Can an employer refuse to hire or fire me because of my gender identity or expression?

No. It is against the law in the City of Seattle for an employer to fire, refuse to hire or carry out any other adverse employment action on the basis of the person's gender identity.

How does a company's dress code apply to me as a transgender employee?

If an employer has a gender-specific dress code, employers should allow you to dress consistent with your gender identity. Employers have a right to establish reasonable employee dress guidelines if they serve a legitimate business or safety purpose. Professions such as law enforcement and emergency response require employees to wear uniforms or protective clothing.

What is the employer's obligation regarding restrooms?

If an employer maintains gender-specific restrooms, you should be permitted to use the restroom that is consistent with your gender identity. All employers need to find solutions that are safe, convenient and respect the transgender employee's dignity.

I went to view an apartment but when the landlord met me he said it was already filled.

I think he was just saying that because I'm a transgender man. Is this illegal?

It is against the law for a landlord to deny housing to you on the basis of your gender identity. Call SOCR if you feel you have been discriminated against to discuss your options. SOCR investigates charges of illegal discrimination.

I am a transgender woman and homeless. The shelter said it served women only and wouldn't allow me to stay. Is this legal?

Transitional housing providers must follow fair housing laws. It is illegal to deny you housing based on your gender identity.

I'm buying a new home and the mortgage lender gave me a higher rate when I met her in person than the quote she gave me by e-mail. I think it may be because I'm transgender. Is she allowed to do this?

It is against the law to give different terms on a loan based on your gender identity. Call SOCR to discuss your options. Our office can conduct an investigation to determine whether the loan terms are discriminatory.

(Thanks to the Washington State Human Rights Commission for the above Q/A information.)

